

**History, gendered space and organizational identity: An archival study of a university building**

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**Abstract**

How do buildings contribute to an organization's sense of what it is? In this paper we present the findings of a major archival study of an iconic university building to answer this question. Founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as a college for women, the building is analysed as a gendered space which embodies meanings which are selectively deployed and adapted by the present-day, now co-educational, university. By bringing together concepts of space and history so as to examine 'space in history' we show how over long periods of time what buildings 'say' about an organization change so that the past is both a legacy and a resource for shifting organizational identity.

**Keywords**

Archive methods, Founder's Building, gender, history, Lefebvre, organizational identity,

Royal Holloway, space

## **Introduction**

There are multiple ways of answering the deceptively simple question: “who are we as an organization?” (Whetten, 2006: 219). Products, purposes, people, culture or ownership might all be possibilities; and whatever answer is given will also have to be attentive to the dynamic and processual nature of organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002), its fluidity (Brown & Humphreys, 2006) and inherent instability (Gioia et al., 2000). This paper adds to existing understandings of this process by showing how organizational identity is linked to the history of organizational space. Buildings and other spatial features of organization are highly significant ways in which history is embodied, understood and deployed in order to answer the question of ‘who we are as an organization’. Following Decker (2014), we bring together historical analyses of organization, which may be neglectful of spatial issues, with spatial analyses of organization, which may be neglectful of historical issues. For as the geographer Doreen Massey argued “space must be conceptualized integrally with time; indeed ... the aim should always be to think in terms of space-time” (Massey, 1994: 2).

Thus we seek to demonstrate not (just) that history can shape organizational identity and not (just) that space can shape organizational identity, but, specifically, that historicised space can do so and, moreover, we explain how, methodologically, this can be shown. So we locate the paper within the intersection between spatial and historical ‘turns’ within organization studies and more precisely in a reading of Henri Lefebvre’s (1974/1991) influential

theorization of the social production of space. Theoretically, we show how Lefebvre's three categories of space are dynamically inter-related over time. The empirical case is the Founder's Building (usually just called 'Founder's') of what is now Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL), opened in 1886 as a women's only college. Because of this history, we give particular attention to how gender features as one of the key parts of the social production of space over time, focussing on the period between its foundation in 1886 and 1965 when the first male undergraduates arrived. We then show how aspects of the history of this space are selectively deployed in the present day to articulate organizational identity. By space we mean not simply the building itself but also its location (in space) and the various uses (of space) within and around it.

Image 1 shows the Founder's Building which is routinely listed as one of the most significant pieces of university architecture in the world. It seems to be 'making a statement'; but what is it 'saying'?

### Insert Image 1

It is easy to see that what it 'says' changes over time. Most obviously, whilst it may be that at the time of its design it was **conceived** of as 'impressive', it is only now **perceived** as 'historic' because of the elapse of time. Moreover, what this means for the experience of those using the building may be quite different – for example it may now be **experienced** as

antiquated or inconvenient. These different aspects of the space and its history are precisely captured by Lefebvre's (1974/1991) triad of conceived, perceived and experienced (or lived) space which we use to frame the presentation of the case.

We will suggest that the Founder's Building and its history constitute an important part of the way that RHUL exists and is reproduced. Its very presence is a reminder of RHUL's history, but there are far more subtle and complex ways in which space, history and organizational identity interact. To illustrate what we will later develop in detail, its spatial location at some distance from both London and the nearest town (Egham) is because it was designed to be isolated from the dangers and temptations of these. This was deemed necessary since it was to be a college for, specifically, women. Thus a social – in this case gendered - meaning was embedded into the very physical space it occupied, and this persists and has effects upon how RHUL is now perceived and experienced (e.g. as a safe environment). The historical trace of gendered segregation is thus embodied in the organization through its spatial location. We will show this in detail later, but for now the point is that the relationship between organizational present and past is mediated through a socially produced space.

Methodologically, the paper approaches the history of this organizational space via a study of the RHUL archive. Archive methods are relatively rare within organization studies but have recently been proposed as having important potential (Rowlinson et al, 2014) as can be seen in studies of organizations (Grey, 2012), of organizational space specifically (Decker, 2014)

and, indeed, of the history of organization studies itself (Hassard, 2012). We seek to demonstrate that archive methods can offer a particular contribution to understanding organizational identity because of long-term, detailed and multi-layered evidence they can provide.

Previous research has tied organizational identity to spaces and places, with Brown & Humphreys' (2006) study of a further education college being a classic example. Within that study, participants frequently "talked about the college buildings as symbolic of their affectionate longing for time past" (2006: 236) and almost constantly implied that place was bound up with history, but the past in such cases is invoked rather than researched. In other words, although it is shown to be part of the way that present-day employees make sense of organizational identity, for example by generating "shared nostalgia" (2006: 234), there is no way of knowing whether it has any historical basis or validity. Nostalgia, for all that it invokes an image of the past is not, after all, history. By conducting historical, specifically archival, research, we are able to disclose the concrete ways in which, over time, organizational identity is constructed.

In summary, the paper seeks to make three main contributions: to theory, by showing the recursive interplay of the three categories of the Lefebvrian triad over time; to methodology, by showing the value of archival history to the analysis of space and organizational identity;

to empirical research, by presenting a detailed case study of history, space and organizational identity.

The first section of the paper overviews the intersections between organizations, space and history. Then we introduce Lefebvre's analysis of space and issues of how space and gender inter-relate. Next we describe the case study site and archive methodology. We then present an account of the organizational space and its history framed by Lefebvre's triad of conceived, perceived and lived space. Finally, we provide a discussion of the significance of this for how organizational history is deployed at the present time with particular reference to how RHUL currently articulates itself to prospective students and the wider world. We conclude by elaborating on the three contributions listed above and make some suggestions for further work.

### **Organizational identity, space and history: An overview**

That space is constitutive of organization and organizational identity has been fairly widely explored in organization theory (e.g. Hernes, 2004; Kornberger & Clegg, 2004; Brown & Humphreys, 2006; Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Chanlat, 2006; Elsbach & Pratt, 2007; Taylor & Spicer, 2007; Dale & Burrell, 2008; Tyler & Cohen, 2010; Gastelaars, 2010; Hancock & Spicer, 2011). This 'spatial turn' has at its heart the idea that space is not just a container or backdrop within or against which organizations exist and operate. Rather, space

both constructs and is constructed organizationally. Similarly, the ‘historical turn’ posits history not just as something that an organization ‘has’ as a context or background, but something actively created and deployed organizationally (Clark & Rowlinson, 2004; Rowlinson et al., 2014). Indeed, the two may be intimately linked when “different buildings come to stand for different epochs in the corporate saga and are often used in anniversary brochures illustrating the development and progress of the company” Berg and Kreiner (1990: 57).

Corporate headquarters and landmark buildings (e.g. Founder’s) are powerful representations and signifiers for organizational memories (Decker, 2014: 515). Additionally, physical space visibly symbolises the meanings and priorities of an organization. For example, the anonymity of post-Fordist office buildings ‘tells’ their occupants that they are ‘nothing special’ (Baldry, 1997: 373); whilst buildings carrying symbols of creativity and fun represent the importance of flexibility and amusement (van Meel and Vos, 2001: 326).

Relatedly, organizational space may have, or be hoped to have, an impact on the values and behaviours of occupants, for example that open-plan offices will foster teamwork and collaboration (Hatch, 1992).

These examples show how the spatial turn rebuts the longstanding and common sense assumption of space as being simply the container within which organizational events occur (Soja, 1980; Kipfer et al., 2008; Yanow, 1998). Instead, space is conceived of as both a

“social product and generative force” (Beyes & Steyaert, 2012: 49), and as such is a dynamic process to be analysed as the “mutually constitutive, dialectical relationship between social structure and space” (Ranade, 2007: 1519). By positioning the relationship between organizational space and social practices as mutually constitutive, that space can no longer be perceived as passive, or as an asocial given. Hence neither physical space nor its symbolic meanings can be detached from their own histories or from wider historical processes.

This insight is deployed to good effect in de Vaujany and Vaast’s (2014) study of organizational space and legitimacy, also using a university building - that of Université Paris-Dauphine (formerly the headquarters of NATO) - as a case study. Here the focus is on the construction of organizational legitimacy rather than identity but, again, it is concerned with the intersection of organizational space and history so that “space and legitimacy are mutually constituted over time” (de Vaujany & Vaast, 2014: 713). In this analysis the Dauphine building is shown not to be a fixed entity – although it does have a concrete physical existence – but a site whose social meanings are historically mutable.

There are numerous ways in which the relationship between space, organizations and history may be theorised, but prominent amongst these is Henri Lefebvre’s work and in particular *The Production of Space* (1974/1991) which has been widely used by space researchers across the social sciences (e.g. Massey, 1994; Harvey, 2006) including organization studies



(e.g. Tyler & Cohen, 2010; Wapshott & Mallett, 2012). In the next section, we briefly introduce this approach.

### **Lefebvre, space and history**

At the heart of Lefebvre's work are a series of claims about space, history and the social. In contrast to natural or 'absolute' space, "social space itself is the outcome of past actions" (Lefebvre, 1991: 73) and "space is at once a precondition and a result of social superstructures" (1991: 85). So-called 'Lefebvrian' studies shift attention from "things in space" to the "actual production of space" (Merrifield, 2000: 172). Lefebvre's work is elegant because he integrates various types of spaces into a comprehensive theoretical framework. Moreover, because space is viewed as a dynamic entity, the Lefebvrian approach is simultaneously geographical, historical and semiotic (Gottdiener, 1993: 131). In this way it may be seen as consonant with the spatial and historical (and, indeed, linguistic) turns within organization theory.

Although Lefebvre's work was not specific to organizational space, its core value lies in crystallising the seemingly abstract notion of space into concrete practices (Watkins, 2005), of which organization might be regarded as one important example. Merrifield (2000: 171) summarised the Lefebvrian understanding of space as an organic and fluid process, where it evolves and collides with other spaces. Therefore, the emphasis lies in the evolution and

interactions in space, no matter whether it is physical, mental or social. Indeed, what

Lefebvre developed was a unitary theory of space that ties physical, mental and social space together.

Lefebvre defined space as something that can be *conceived* (thought of, designed, planned, redesigned, maintained etc); *perceived* (interpreted and having meanings and rules) and through interaction is *experienced* or *lived* (Lefebvre, 1991; see also Gottdiener, 1993, Wasserman, 2011). This Lefebvrian ‘triad’ enables organizational space to be studied as a condensation of all the social concepts and interrelationships through which it has emerged and evolved. Thus within the triad there are a series of interconnections. For example, the perceived space may be more or less similar to the conceived space, and may both inform and be changed by the lived space. Or the conceived space may incorporate an idea about the lived space which is more or less consistent with how it is actually lived.

To be less abstract, consider the example of airport spaces (Pedersen, 2006; Adey, 2008).

Securing safe and smooth operations is vital and the conceived space reflects this through the carefully designed control of passenger flows. This is crystallised on the perceived level through the use of signs to guide passengers to move through a designed route. Moreover, the introduction of catering facilities and duty-free stores not only serve to improve passengers’ experience (and airport revenues) but also act as the tools for dispersing and managing the crowd and so are in line with conceived space, whilst adding a new layer to the perceived

space. In this way, the space may be experienced as, for example, a shopping mall rather than an airport, albeit in ways to some degree designed. However, to take another aspect, sleeping overnight in the airport is now common, especially for budget travellers. These overnight sleepers turn the airport into a 'camping site' and the armchairs in the waiting area are occupied for sleeping, with some passengers even bringing equipment to make this more comfortable. So in this way, the experienced space of the airport diverges both from how it was originally conceived and from the intended rules of the perceived space.

It has been pointed out that the categories of the Lefebvre triad are not tidy, and that, in particular, the distinction between perceived and lived or experienced space is unclear (Shields, 1999: 161). Zhang (2006), following Elden (2004), argues that whilst this is so, it reflects Lefebvre's use of dialectics in an attempt to show how lived space entails a kind of resolution of the tensions between conceived and perceived space without being reducible to either. Thus, indeed, lived space contains elements of perceived and conceived space but is distinctive in relating to the subjective experience of space. In this way Lefebvre offers a multi-dimensional approach to space in which the three parts of the triad interact rather than a rigid categorization of types of space.

This capacity to attend to the multiple meanings of space makes Lefebvre's work fruitful for the study of, specifically, organizational space. For instance, Kingma (2008: 33) noted that while conceived space is relevant for the power issues in an organization, lived space is

particularly helpful for the analysis of alternative meanings of organizational space (see also Watkins, 2005). So, for example, whereas an open plan office may be designed to promote team working, its users may 'live' the space by separating themselves off with plants or files, or by wearing headphones. In this way the lived space may be resistant to the power effects of conceived space.

Within these power issues, Lefebvre's triad is also relevant for explicating the gender-space interrelationship (Franck, 1985), which he depicts as being in a constant state of becoming (Ranade, 2007: 157). That is, both space and gender are constructed and evolve constantly in interaction with political, economic and historical forces. He suggested that the first task is to 'delineate the social functions' of the environment, and then to analyse different implications of these functions for women and men (Franck, 1985: 146). At a very basic level this might be to do with wholesale gender segregations in line with prevailing social beliefs (e.g. separate male and female bathrooms). Or if considering the perceived or lived space, then personal decorations can express gender identities. Importantly, within this type of analysis space is not just about fixtures (walls, corridors etc.) but also, as argued in Halford & Leonard's (2006) study of gendered identity and space, to do with "movement between and within organizational spaces [which] relies on the continual and complex articulation of spatial rules and resources: access and exclusion; speed and direction; posture and comportment ..." (2006: 96).

There is now a well-established literature on space and gender (e.g. and especially Massey, 1994) and Löw (2006: 130) argues that “space and gender are relational as a production process based on relation and demarcation”. To take one, specifically organizational, example, Tyler & Cohen (2010) explore the relationships between gender and organizational space extensively, also in part with reference to Lefebvre, and also using university buildings as a case. They show how space and gender interact, for example in gendered negotiations and contestations over who legitimately ‘owns’ shared workspaces (2010: 187). Or, related to the point about personal decorations, how it may be perceived as ‘unprofessional’ if women display family photographs in work spaces (2010: 175). Thus it is within the overall terrain of interconnections between social space, history, organization and gender that we approach our case study, to which we now turn.

### **Case study: The Founder’s Building**

The Founder’s Building is the main building of Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL), previously known as Royal Holloway College.<sup>1</sup> Created by Thomas Holloway, a Victorian businessman, “the College is founded by the advice of the Founder’s wife to afford the best education suitable for *women of middle and upper classes*” (RHC RF/1/1/4 emphasis added)<sup>2</sup>. Holloway employed architect William Henry Crossland to design the building which was modelled on the Chateau de Chambord in France (RHC RF/125/3).

An alternative design plan was that of an Oxbridge college which was the most popular and legitimate style for university colleges, and both Oxford and Cambridge were establishing women's colleges at around the same time. This was abandoned but, even if only coincidentally, the Chateau model shared with the Oxbridge model an architecture of quadrangles<sup>3</sup> and cloisters, and a chapel with clock tower. Additionally the building included a Picture Gallery, dining hall, library, residential accommodation for students and (female) staff, office accommodation for staff, recreational and medical amenities for students and staff, and teaching rooms.

The College was (and is) located in 135 acres of woodland and gardens, about 20 miles from the centre of London and a mile from the town of Egham and its railway station. The first students, 28 in number, arrived in 1887. Although a small number of male postgraduates were admitted from 1945, it did not become fully co-educational until 1965 when some 100 male undergraduates arrived. Today, RHUL has many other buildings on its campus, but Founder's Building remains the dominant presence. It now houses about 500 first year undergraduate students, some academic departments and the bulk of the university administration.

## **Method**

The Founder's Building serves well as a case study of the history of organizational space and, moreover, one where archive methods may be deployed to good effect. It has a reasonably lengthy history which is well-documented and preserved in an archive which has not experienced any known disruptions (e.g. fire or flooding). This does not mean that the history of Founder's can be fully reconstructed from the archive, for several reasons (see Freshwater, 2003; Mills & Helm Mills, 2011; Decker, 2013, 2014). In a recent archive-based organizational study Grey (2012: 25-26) enumerates these. In summary, they are that archive records usually only record the formal, not the informal, aspects of organization; that what is recorded and kept is a social construction; and that in any case the meaning of the documents is a matter of interpretation by researchers.

Whilst these caveats are well-taken, archival research does offer particular advantages. Most obviously, it allows an understanding of an organization over a longer time frame than any other method. For example, oral history interview methods are necessarily restricted to the life span of the interviewee. Moreover, interviewees may be prone to mis-remembering, both in terms of what is forgotten and what is remembered inaccurately, or to retrospective sense making by interviewees. In an archive, the documents preserved are accurate in the sense that they are as written at the time in question. And where there are gaps these are frequently

obvious, for example where it is recorded in the archive that documents have been lost or where particular policies on the retention or discarding of documents are formally stated.

The College archive is housed within the Founder's Building and has existed formally since 1948. The time span of the archive materials predates the official opening of RHUL in 1889, with the earliest relevant document dating to 1873, and the collection is ongoing. These records reveal much of how the Founder's Building was designed and built, which is directly relevant to conceived space. The archive has a wide coverage of materials ranging from minutes of meetings to photographs of garden parties. Besides the institutional records, which are continuous, the archive holds over 50 collections of personal papers created by early students and staff. Unlike the institutional records, the personal collections are discontinuous. The combination of institutional and non-institutional materials allows a more vivid picture to emerge than would the institutional materials alone. While the formal records disclose the 'official' story of the building and organisation on the conceived and perceived levels, personal reminiscences, memorandum and photographs are stronger evidence of individual experience and hence the lived space.

Unlike other methods, it is unrealistic to specify the population or sampling strategy for an archive. Instead, our paper relies on the strategy of immersion through familiarisation with the archive materials. We used its online catalogue to search the archive, initially using 'Founder's Building' as the key word. By immersion in the materials generated, new



keywords emerged, such as ‘Thomas Holloway’, ‘William Crossland’, ‘correspondence of Thomas Holloway and Crossland’, ‘student rooms’, ‘maids’, ‘gender’, ‘residence’.

The analysis used Mills and Mills’ (2011) three-step method for reference: from making sense of the contents, to analysing contents as genres of communication, and finally as social action. The focus of analysis shifted from the materials themselves to the background information, such as how they were produced, used and communicated. As previously mentioned archival materials are not objective, but reflect the power “of the present to control what the future will know of the past” (Schwartz and Cook, 2002: 13). For instance, as stated on the archive website (2016), “women’s education is the cornerstone of the collection”, reflecting the original motivation of the archive and resonating with the founder’s vision. That is, the curation of the archive is not ‘neutral’ but embodies and conveys certain values and priorities. Moreover, as in many archival studies, a massive amount of material was available and the role of the archivist in pointing towards likely sources was important (King, 2012).

One of the main claims that we make in this paper is that archive methods are an especially useful and important way of conducting research on organizational space and identity. This is for two broad reasons. First, if we take seriously the idea that organizational identity is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon that develops historically then archive methods offer a way of accessing that history over long sweeps of time. If organizational identity is not

static but dynamic and processual, as the literature cited earlier insists, then it is necessary to reconstruct that dynamic process, which archive methods allow us to do. Secondly, as regards space, specifically, archive methods enable the process of social production to be made concrete and explicit. So whereas the Lefebvrian categories are abstract, archive methods allow us to disclose what lies beneath those abstractions: conceived space, for example, entails deciding upon and articulating the conception of the space. These decisions and articulations are recorded in the archive documents. Similarly, the changing ways that space was perceived and lived can be reconstructed from the detailed evidence that is preserved in the archive, for example in diaries and reminiscences.

In the following sections we present some of the main contours of Founder's as an organizational space, via the heuristic categories of Lefebvre's triad, and focussing on the period from the foundation through to co-education in 1965.

#### *Founder's Building as conceived space*

At one level, the conception of the space can be regarded as reflecting the influence of Holloway as the most important 'stakeholder'. Such a view was nicely summarised by a local magazine report: "As buildings,<sup>4</sup> the foundations he [Thomas Holloway] instituted are remarkable and bear the stamp of his exceptional individuality" (RHC RF/125/10). Similarly, Vickery (1999: 137) claims that the building was a proclamation about Holloway "himself,

his wealth and philanthropy” rather than the about women’s higher education and, indeed, there are many examples in the archival materials of Holloway directly shaping the building’s design. But this interpretation seriously understates the many ways in which the space was conceived by reference to socially legitimate ways of designing such spaces. For example the Chapel cannot be understood as a space without recognizing that it arose from the principle, stated explicitly in the Rules and Regulations of 1912 (but going back to the foundation), that the domestic life of the college should be that of “an orderly Christian household, religious services provided every morning by the lady principal” (RHC GB/102/1).

Moreover, Holloway devoted considerable effort to researching how to design and run a women’s college. In the archive there is a large collection of booklets and pamphlets about other women colleges and correspondence with education experts, council members, etc. about such colleges. Thus the conceived space did not come ‘out of his head’ but out of a process of comparison with existing conceptions, giving rise, for example, to the decision to create a Picture Gallery and to the two-room model (i.e. bedroom and study room) for student accommodation.

In particular, the archive shows that Vassar College, a women’s college in the United States, was a key model for the design of the College. Thus in one pamphlet (RHC GB/130/4) about Vassar College, Holloway underlined and annotated certain points showing that from them was derived the idea of providing health care for student residents, which led in turn to

designing a health centre (with a nurse) as part of the building. Subsequently, Holloway's brother-in-law visited Vassar and collected more information that was used in the Founder's Building design (Vickery, 1999). The significance of Vassar College is two-fold in terms of the conceived space. On the one hand, it was a pre-existing residential women's college – founded in 1861 - and as such could be seen as a legitimate model. On the other hand, and unlike Oxbridge women's colleges, it was founded by a wealthy businessman, Matthew Vassar.

So it is not that there is an obvious architectural resemblance between Founder's Building and the original Vassar College building. It is that they share a *social* resemblance in attempting to make an impressive statement. Thus in Vickery's (1999:118) study of women's colleges in Britain, Founder's Building is seen to stand out for being a "palatial residence" which is "ornate, exuberant, luxurious". It is as if Holloway looked to Vassar as a template not just as a template for a women's college, but as a template for the kind of women's college a successful, rich philanthropist would build.

A commitment to women's education permeated the conceived space. The 1883 Deed of Foundation of the College (RHC GB/102/1) emphasises the importance of providing the same higher education opportunity for female students as men (RHC RF/125/10). This was to be achieved in a particular way, to which space was central: the College Rules and Regulations (RHC 1/1/4) specified that all of the female students should be resident in the

Founder's Building and that no male teachers or professors could reside in the Founder's Building. Thus a gender paradigm of 'separate spheres' is evident in terms of the conceived space. Indeed, even before the actual design or construction, space and gender were centrally implicated in the very location of the College. It was set at some distance from London and in a place where little public transport was available. This was part and parcel of the plan for the college 'to be a women's university in its own right'. Female students were therefore expected to have minimal contact with the outside world, which is reinforced by this enclosed environment. Founder's Building was designed as a 'self-contained community' with various amenities allowing it to be relatively self-sufficient. This too was bound up with the idea that it should be a safe space for women, who were to reside on site rather than, say, in private accommodation in the nearby town (in the way that male students at other universities were able to).

Therefore, gender identity is part of the active process of how Founder's Building was produced and indicates the accepted behaviours in this space. Franck (1985: 157) explained this process in terms of "society's expectations of what activities should take place where, who should pursue those activities, and how they should relate to each other". In this way, the organisational space is a physical manifestation of social concepts. The design of Founder's Building as a space apart from wider society, and internally divided within, reflected and

created an expectation of women's and men's spaces being separated: it was both gendered in its conception and conceived of as a gendered space.

Whilst factors such as the legitimate design of a women's college, the kind of design that a wealthy philanthropist might endorse, and religious and gender norms all form part of the social construction of the space, so too does social class. For, as quoted earlier, RHUL was established for women from, specifically, the middle and upper classes. This, indeed, is another part of what lies behind the seclusion of the space, for the students were not just women but 'nice' women, in need of protection. In a more fine-grained way, the provision of two-room accommodation for the students reflects the kind of spatial expectations of people from those classes, whilst the provision of accommodation for maids reflects the lifestyle such students would expect (i.e. to have servants). Moreover, these maids were spatially segregated from their class superiors by having their bedrooms, and their own common rooms, on the fifth floor of the building. Indeed, the class assumptions embedded in the building were very obvious to those, perhaps in the early days few, students who came from working class backgrounds, such as this 1930s student:

Life at RHC was so different. The educational side I could cope with. But no one had prepared me for the different life style. From sharing a bedroom I now had two rooms of my own - a bedroom and a study. There was a maid to wake me, pull the curtain

and bring me hot washing water. She made the bed and cleaned the bedroom and study. There was formal dinner every evening except Sunday and everyone was expected to change, so for the first time in my life I had dinner dresses (RHC RF/132/3).

In brief, then, the organizational space can be understood not (or not simply) as having been conceived by its founder or its architect but as an expression and embodiment of certain social ideas and norms – ideas and norms that came to be literally built into the organizational fabric.

#### *Founder's Building as perceived space*

Lefebvre's notion of perceived space covers both physical appearance and artefacts, and the regulation of movements and interactions in space. The former can be observed in photographs and in the descriptions provided by students, staff, and visitors. 'Femininity' was embedded in nearly every corner of the building, from the decorations through to the furniture. To take one example, it was specified in Thomas Holloway's Will that every bedroom should contain a looking glass. Yet, at the same time, femininity was an achievement of the occupants themselves, with one student from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century recording that:

Our studies and bedrooms were fundamentally devoid of any frivolity and a powerful effort was needed to achieve charm. Our curtains were heavy Victorian damasks ... On appeal, a delicate student might be awarded a sofa ... In each bedroom there were also an old-fashioned wash-stand, complete with crockery, a hard chair, a severe dressing-table and a commodious wardrobe, designed, like the dresser, to take all-racks, for hats, drawers below, and a long hanging space to take our full length dresses (RHC RF/131/7).

Image 2 is a photograph of a classroom, and the floral print wallpaper and the decorations on the window sill are clearly stereotypically feminine. This is also evident in study rooms of students (Image 3). Here, a feminine impression is created by the light colouring ornaments and furnishing style. This impression is designed to attract not just women students, but women students of a certain social class, which is the counterpart of the conceived space of Founder's Building and its surroundings grounds as an elegant space for women to live and study.

### Insert Image 2

### Insert Image 3



Yet the feminine style of the physical artefacts is only one aspect of the gendering of perceived space. Alongside it is the regulation of movements and interactions which as noted earlier have also been identified as aspects of gender and space (Halford & Leonard, 2006). These varied at different periods, but in the early decades there was a strict control of who did what, when, and where. A 'Daily Routine' prescribed the exact time for getting up, prayers, eating and going to bed, including a cut off time by which students must be in their own rooms (in Image 4 we reproduce the 1906 rules, but something similar was in place from the foundation up to at least the 1940s). This was regulated through ringing the bell in the clock tower that dominates the entrance to the College. By requiring the presence of the residents in specific places at specific times, their movements were also controlled (echoing Massey's (1994) point about the interdependence of space and time).

### Insert Image 4

It should be recalled that the College did not merely house students, there were also a large number of maids, and both groups were subject to stringent rules (and punishments if these were transgressed). The maids had to follow the Daily Routine and also an additional set of rules (Image 5), in force from the foundation up to at least the late 1940s (after which, as in more general society, the use of maids declined anyway). These rules were also to do with

both time (when to do what) and space (how to use the space) and also show that the social production of space involved not only gender but social hierarchy. We have noted that the foundation was for the education of middle and upper class women; but they were to be attended to by working class women – and, as we will see, men – for whom conditions of work were tough, as this 1927 maid recalled:

I was only there about a year ... it was hard, very hard ... There were bathrooms there but they didn't have hot water in the wash basins. We had no Hoovers, we just got down on our knees (RHC RF/132/4).

### Insert Image 5

Although both students and maids were subject to rules, violations had harsher results for maids, as this 1908 example shows:

Miss Knowles, our Lady Housekeeper, kept a firm hand over the maids and she stood no nonsense. There was a terrible occasion when some of the younger maids, having watched the students run corridor races from the West pantries, decided to run

corridor races of their own on West IV that evening after prayers. Miss Knowles stopped their Christmas holiday (RHC RF/131/6).

Indeed for the maids, violations of the rules could lead to dismissal:

I did get the sack, but it wasn't my fault. I went out with the Head Maid and second maid who got a pass till 12 o'clock, but I didn't get and had to be in at past nine or ten at the latest ... Next morning, I was sent away because Miss Stracklon was going to make an example of us so that the other girls would realise word was law (RHC RF/132/4).

In this and many similar cases recorded in the archive the violation is of rules about space (and time) which relate directly to the way that the space was meant to be largely segregated from the outside world, and especially from men (e.g. the rule against male residents but also rules against both students and maids having men in their rooms without a chaperone). This also meant that there were strict rules for visitors entering the space and associated perceived spatial attributes, most obviously the main gates and the various entrances around the quadrangles (RHC RF/131/8).

However, in addition to being in this way a ‘separate space’ (from the outside world), within the College itself there were gendered ‘separate spheres’ within the perceived space as enacted by the control of movements and interactions. To take one specific example, until 1927 no male servants (only female maids) were allowed in the dining hall and even after that only the head butler (RHC RF/131/8). Thus in addition to the rules for women residents and maids, there were specific ‘Instructions to Men’ (Image 6 shows the 1916 version) which applied to the many men working in or around the building, such as servants , butlers, night watchmen and gardeners. Among these instructions, the control of where and when they should enter and leave the building is first in the list. The men should use the Business Entrance or Coal Cellar West, which ensured they had no interactions with the female students who used the Student’s Entrance. The prohibition on entering the College out of hours also seems likely to relate to attempts to segregate the sexes. However, by no means all these rules were about gender – for example the prohibition on using work time and premises for non-College work that can be seen in the document – although they do regulate the use of space.

### Insert Image 6

If the conceived space embodied various ideas and social norms that the building potentially expressed, the perceived space *enacts* the building in particular ways so as to make those

potentials manifest (or not). So, for example, the remote location was conceived as a way of keeping women students separate from the outside world of men, but its enactment as perceived space entailed such things as regulating those coming in and out of the building, and where, and the interactions of the people using the building. Similarly, whilst conceived of as a space for female residential education, it is artefacts such as decoration and furniture which contribute to enacting it as a specifically feminized space.

#### *Founder's Building as lived space*

Conceived and perceived space may be more or less consistent with each other (e.g. the remote location might or might not be enacted through control of the entrance gates) and in turn may or may not be consistent with the lived space. There is ample evidence, certainly, of a consistency between the conception of an impressive space and the lived space. To take just one of very many examples found in the archives (this from a male maintenance worker in the 1960s):

I remember telling my wife about my first impressions of the College and I remember saying that when I came through the gates it was just like a fairy castle - and it still does to me. It was to me a fairy castle! A beautiful building (RHC RF/132/3).

Whilst this is the most commonly expressed view it was not universally shared, with one student calling it “a monstrosity” (RHC RF/132/6) and, moreover, whatever the overall view of the building the practicalities of living in it were sometimes experienced negatively, especially in terms of being cold in winter (RHC RF/132/6).

Whatever opinions were held of the space, it was not necessarily used as planned, for it is doubtful that the Holloways envisaged that a female student (in the 1950s) would do this:

The other physical feel of the place was the enormous length of the corridors. They are meant to be an eighth of a mile long ... and I can remember taking up a dare to run naked from one end of the corridor to the other (RHC RF/132/6).

Equally, one interesting feature is the tunnel underneath the Founder’s Building leading to a boiler house, which was created so that the “delicate sensibilities of the girls would not be upset by the sight of men servants and their carts”<sup>5</sup>. Yet, at least apocryphally, this tunnel was used by students and maids to hide male visitors and, more certainly, to bypass the strict rules and regulations, as recalled by a maid in the 1940s:

On another night we had all been out to Staines. And the boiler house man said that he would leave the gate open and this tunnel was on a 3 minute time switch, so we would

get down with the light on, run up the tunnel and you could come up the tunnel on the East Side (RHC RF/132/4).

These kinds of resistances to the gender segregation even extended in some cases to violations of the overnight rules for male guests, as a student in the 1950s found:

You weren't meant to have men in your rooms before 10:30 in the morning and not after 10:00 at night. And it would cause waves - like I can remember taking someone's brother down to breakfast after a ball because I didn't know what to do with him ... that caused enormous ructions and I had to write one of those notes of apology to the Residence Officer (RHC RF/132/6).

There is also some evidence in the archives of female students dressing as men, although the purpose is unclear from this 1906 account:

I was intending to go to bed early but I saw a man disappear into Frida's room. This excited me so much that I stood by to await developments. On her reappearing she turned out to be Evelyn completely transformed by the aid of a collar (RHC RF/136/9).

However, it should not be thought that such violations were the norm and, moreover, although from a present-day perspective the gender segregation seems very restrictive it is not necessarily the case that it was experienced as such, especially by comparison with what the female students had been used to in their schools and families. As a 1950s student recalled:

Here we were in a very privileged position ... an enclosed environment that's true ... but it was much more liberated, you met with men, if you went and used the Student's Union in London ... or you took part in some sort of inter-collegiate things in London (RHC RF/132/6).

This is important to understand, both in terms of the social mutability of what 'freedom' and 'restriction' mean but also in terms of the distinction of conceived and lived space. For whereas the space was conceived of as separate from both men and, relatedly, London, for students like this one the experience narrated is in terms of the possibility of meeting men, and in London.

Nevertheless the fact that gender segregation was deeply ingrained in lived experience became very evident when the first male postgraduates arrived in 1945:



I was in a room one day getting ready for lunch and my next door neighbour-she came into my room and she said 'Look, look, men!' And there were two or three young men wearing blazers and standing around ...and they were obviously waiting to go into lunch. And we thought 'Gosh you know. I think they must be those post graduates' (RHC RF/132/5).

Moreover the admission of male students did not allow them residency in Founder's Building. Thus when RHUL became co-educational in 1965, the 'separate sphere' notion changed but was not discarded straight away. Instead of living in Founder's Building the male students were all resident in the Kingswood building, which is located 1.5 miles away from Founder's building. This tentative re-negotiation of space and gender should be understood in terms of the impetus towards co-education and at least part of the reason was a concern about the lack of social contacts with men for the female students (RHC GB/203/2). In other words, the social meaning of a segregated space was beginning to shift from desirable to problematic.

Nevertheless, both the internal and external reaction to the arrival of the first male undergraduates was to see it as an 'invasion', a revealingly spatial metaphor, with a newspaper reporting that the admission of men damaged RHUL's image as a 'gloried female

college' (RHC RF/120/25/1). Its history and identity were called into question by the presence of men, revealing indirectly how its history and identity were bound up with the *exclusion* of men. At the same time, it impacted on internal behaviours. For instance, after the arrival of male students, a female student posted this query on the student magazine:

I have started to go out with a boy. This is having a bad effect on my work because he seems to have very little work and is always asking me out in the evenings. Which should suffer, work or happiness? (RHC AS/200/46)

The space was now experienced differently – not just a place of work and learning – because its gendered segregation had shifted.

Through the lenses of conceived, perceived and lived space we can understand Founder's as embodying a set of meanings and practices which are in some respects enduring and in other respects changing over time. How, then, is this deployed in articulating the present day organization?

## **Discussion: The past in the present**

In 2016 a major new building programme began at RHUL adjacent to the Founder's Building. On the fences around the building site a number of hoardings were erected, one of which (Image 7) contained these words:

Over the years and still today, libraries, lecture halls, laboratories, dining rooms, kitchens and open spaces have provided our College community with the spaces it needs to be inspired, and each generation has adapted and developed the space to meet their needs.

This encapsulates the central claim that we want to make in this paper: that organizational space and its history can be a key resource for the present-day identity of an organization.

Here, indeed, are the explicit linkages of 'the space', the present ('still today') the past ('over the years') and organization ('our College community'). It is noteworthy that this hoarding appeared after this research had begun and seems to confirm the analysis that we had already begun to make.

### Insert Image 7

One place to start is, indeed, with the reference to ‘community’, which figured prominently in the original sentiment behind the remote and self-contained location and which is similarly prominent in contemporary marketing material, so that the 2017 Undergraduate prospectus headlines (p.1) RHUL as “a close-knit community”<sup>6</sup> and contains no less than 72 mentions of community. The cover page of the prospectus (and indeed throughout the prospectus) reproduces huge images of the Founder’s Building so that there is an inescapable linkage between what RHUL ‘is’ and the building itself (even though, now, there are a myriad of other buildings on the campus).

That space and organizational meaning and identity are closely linked is also very evident on the RHUL website, where the text (accompanied by a picture of Founder’s Building) of the page on ‘our campus’ is worth quoting in its entirety:

**We have a unique best-of-both-worlds location; a safe, leafy campus in Egham, Surrey - less than 40 minutes by train from central London and just seven miles from Heathrow airport, creating the environment where a close-knit community thrives.**

Our campus is one of the most beautiful in the world with numerous teaching and study spaces, bars and cafés, high-quality accommodation, and sports facilities. All this is set in 135 acres of stunning parkland.

Most teaching and social activity takes place on campus and, with the exception of Kingswood Hall (just a mile away), this is where most undergraduates live in their first year. It's a friendly place, with a strong sense of community as new students soon become familiar faces.

Founder's Building is one of the world's most spectacular university buildings, and home to our famous Picture Gallery containing Thomas Holloway's fine collection of Victorian paintings, and our beautiful chapel. It also houses a dining hall and library and provides a home for 500 students.

Situated just 40 minutes by train from London and seven miles from Heathrow, with a number of attractions, sporting and entertainment venues within easy reach, you'll love our brilliant location.<sup>7</sup> [Emphasis in original]

Of note here is the emphasis on the beauty of the space (both the parkland and the building) and the 'spectacular' nature of the Founder's Building including reference to the Picture Gallery, 'beautiful' chapel, dining hall and library; and the twice-mentioned linkage to not just community but to a 'strong sense' of 'close-knit' community. All these relate to the conceived space described above, as does the opening reference to 'safety'.

This is worth reflecting on further. As we have seen the idea of safety was pivotal to the gendered foundation of the College and gets reproduced both here and in the prospectus. It

takes on a more specific aspect in invoking a survey of the safest university areas in the country (in which RHUL is ranked first for student safety in the UK) in the student prospectus and also on the hoardings around the new building site (Image 8). The resonance of the notion of safety is particularly strong for international students who are an important part of the present-day RHUL demographic.

### Insert Image 8

These various ways in which the history of organizational space are used to construct meaning and identity might, perhaps, be understood in a path-dependency fashion. That is, the inheritance of the organizational space lays out lines for the present-day identity, and marketing, of RHUL. Yet the extract above is suggestive of something rather different. The remoteness of the building, so key to the conceived space, is very substantially denied in the present. Instead, proximity to London and to Heathrow airport are stressed. One aspect of this is the historical mutability of notions of closeness and distance. The issue is not just one of the changing technology of transport links; it is that what used to be seen as a positive (distance) is now seen as a negative. Indeed, students and staff now often complain about the remoteness of RHUL from London. So, now, remoteness is drawn upon to stress safety, but downplayed by emphasising connectivity, and re-deployed to claim ‘the best of both worlds’.

Within this, gender is extremely important. RHUL is now fully co-educational but its history as a women's college is very much foregrounded. Indeed, this history features prominently on the website and in promotional materials, including the existence of its archive: that is, both history and the self-conscious awareness of history are made present. The gendered nature of this history is very much emphasised, for example in the 'Inspiring Women' campaign that has run since 2015. However, this has morphed into a more diffuse notion of 'diversity', which is stressed in all promotional materials and, in particular, internationalism (for which RHUL is one of the most highly ranked universities in the world). Thus, in the 2017 prospectus the word 'international' features 258 times (admittedly in some cases within course titles), whilst the word 'women' features 11 times, of which 5 are in the section on the history of RHUL, and gender features seven times, of which six are course titles.

As for the class basis of RHUL's foundation, this has all but disappeared in the present-day articulation of the organization. In the 2017 prospectus the word does not appear at all, and on the web page about the history of RHUL whilst women and the building are mentioned several times there is no reference at all to the fact that it was created as an institution for women of the "middle and upper classes". Thus this part of the organization's history is most emphatically *not* used to articulate current meanings, and to do so would fly in the face of 'diversity' in general and RHUL's social access obligations in particular. It does, though, continue to linger in rather shadowy ways in the experienced space of Founder's Building,

for example in the way that the ‘best’ staff offices (large rooms with three-panel bay windows) are those which were once the sitting rooms under the ‘two-room’ system deemed appropriate for middle and upper class students, whilst the rooms that were once the bedrooms are markedly inferior (small rooms with a single sash window).

The spatial legacy of gender is perhaps more obvious. Thus there are still male and female floors for residential space in the Founder’s Building, long after such segregations have disappeared in most student accommodation on campus where unisex flats are the norm.

Especially revealing is the legacy of the gendered location of RHUL vis à vis both the town/railway station and Kingswood Hall (specifically mentioned in quotation above about ‘our campus’ as an outlying location, albeit now its relative *closeness* is mentioned). These three locations each have a particular place in the gendered history of the space, as we have noted: RHUL was distant from town to segregate women; Kingswood was distant from RHUL to house the first male students. Today, there is a shuttle bus linking these three spatial locations which runs twice an hour. Of course it is not tagged as the ‘gender bus’ and, of course, no one thinks of it as such. Yet gender is precisely why it exists; and every single time it runs it reproduces the way that the gendered spatialisation of RHUL’s past is still present.

Thus we can see history and space working in a number of different ways. One is the deliberate appropriation and deployment of aspects of the space for present-day purposes



(e.g. stressing the iconic building); another is the re-casting of the space in slightly changed ways (e.g. remoteness/safety but also connectivity); but this is selective (e.g. foregrounding gender but not class aspects of the space). The other is not deliberate but more to do with the spatial traces left by history (e.g. the bus route or the layout of rooms). Some of these traces are very subtle. For example, the bell-regulated Daily Routine, beginning with prayers, has long since disappeared but the bell still rings each hour, and RHUL is the only remaining university in Britain (including Oxbridge colleges) to still have a daily chapel service in term time. Other ways that history and space are currently understood are more peculiar and can be seen as resistant to the kinds of 'official' usages seen in, for example the prospectus: the complexity of this large building have made it a target for present-day 'place hackers' who seek to access various restricted or disused parts of the building!<sup>8</sup> Particularly prized is accessing the old tunnel, mentioned earlier, between Founder's and the Boilerhouse built to keep male workers from the eyes of women and used, also in a resistant way, to circumvent building access rules.

Finally, it should be noted that the deployment of history is an ongoing process. It is tempting to think of this deployment as deriving from 'the building', but as we showed earlier that building was itself part of a historical process – for example by being based upon an existing building, the Chateau de Chambord, and having elements of traditional Oxbridge architecture, whilst being informed by what had been done at Vassar College. Moreover, all

of these had their own histories. Thus although the 'Foundation' might be seen as the starting point for RHUL it is itself located within a longer and ongoing appropriation and deployment of past spaces, just as the new building hoardings project that process into the future.

## **Conclusion**

“Spaces contain a history in which meanings can become layered or even abstracted, 'mythologised', over time” (Wapshott & Mallett, 2012: 77). This paper has contributed to existing theorizations of organizational space by showing the dynamic and recursive inter-relationship between the Lefebvrian categories of conceived, perceived and experienced space and, hence, how these shape organizational identity. The three categories shift and change over time so that the organizational space is not just an 'inheritance' but something whose meaning is amenable to re-working and re-interpretation. The bricks and mortar have not changed, but their social and organizational meaning has. Just as “social space ... is the outcome of past actions” (Lefebvre, 1991: 73) so too is it retrospectively redefined by present day actions, decisions and beliefs. Thus those 'past actions' are themselves susceptible to re-interpretation rather than being immutable and finished with events. To put it another way, organizational space is not just a fixed conception which is perceived and experienced in different ways as time goes by but, rather, is subject to ongoing re-conception. Thus, in this case, a space that was conceived of in terms of, *inter alia*, class and gender propriety

becomes re-conceived in terms of diversity and community; with both contributing to a changing sense of organizational identity.

Existing research has examined the social production of space, sometimes using Lefebvrian analysis. Equally, historical research has become increasingly common in organization studies. But here we have brought together spatial and historical conceptions of organization so as to go beyond using the theoretical concepts of 'space' and 'history' by making 'space in history' the conceptual focus.

That we have been able to do so flows directly from and is enabled by the use of archival methods. This is the second, methodological, contribution of the paper, the significance of which is that it discloses the long-term, documented historical processes which underpin what would otherwise be the abstractions of the social production of space. For that social production is not abstract: it consists of a myriad of interactions, decisions, plans experiences many of which were recorded at the time and have been preserved to the present day. This has enabled us to show how space and history contribute to the construction of organizational identity.

Of the many ways in which organizations acquire and articulate meaning and identity, buildings stand out as being particularly tangible. In some ways it can be possible to answer the question 'what is this organization?' by pointing – perhaps literally – to its physical incarnation. Our third, empirical contribution has been to examine the case of RHUL and

Founder's Building where this is indeed very apparent, with a very close association being made between the organization and the building: *What* is RHUL? Why, just look, there it is! That much had already been established by previous research. What we add with this case is to show how the organizational identity provided by space is not just whatever is 'there' in the present. The accreted traces of its history form a reservoir from which, more or less deliberately, more or less selectively and more or less subtly, the organization in the present is constituted, articulated and understood. Thus Holloway's desire for a building to express his status becomes a resource that RHUL today is able to deploy to express its status. With respect to the gendered nature of space, we have shown how this carries forward so that, for example, the remote location considered suitable for keeping genteel women safe is re-deployed as a message of safety from crime in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Within the building itself, both its most dramatic features (e.g. Picture Gallery and Chapel) and its most mundane features (e.g. different sizes and shapes of rooms) can be understood via the history through which they developed. Thus the gallery and chapel reflect both the kind of facilities thought proper for a women's college as well as the desire for grand statement. And the room sizes and shapes reflect the gender and class meanings of their design. For sure many of these traces – as with the example of the shuttle bus – are subtle and all but forgotten whilst others, such as the class basis of the space, seem almost deliberately

to have been airbrushed out. But they are still there, just as much as in the full-throated deployment the building in the present-day articulation of what RHUL is.

What is crucial here is that by using an archival method we have been able to approach these accreted traces of the past by historical research. In this sense, the case study is both a case of space and identity in and of itself, but also a case, so to speak, of how to use archival history to analyse space and identity. Clearly it would be possible to start from the present and to see how, in the present, history is invoked and deployed to articulate organizational identity.

This, for example, is how Brown and Humphreys (2006) show the ways that organizational members make references to the past to talk about place and identity. But the archival method allows us to see how that present-day invocation is the outcome of a long historical process (for example, we would not know why the building is sited where it is without the documents which explain this). Of course almost no-one in the present-day organization will have read or even be aware of what is in the archive and in that sense the historical process, whilst shaping organizational identity, is largely invisible. What archival research achieves is to render it considerably more visible. So whilst theories of organizational identity have identified that it is processual in nature, those theories are augmented by a methodology that allows that process to be disclosed.

One important area for future work would be to bring together the historical processes disclosed by archive methods with research into the meaning and experience of

organizational space for present-day users, for example through interviews with them. Other areas which would repay further study include filling out existing understandings of space and gender. Studies such as Halford & Leonard's work on hospitals have shown how "the practices through which our doctors and nurses, women and men negotiate gendered working identities are constituted in and between ... sharply differentiated spaces" (2006: 81), and Tyler & Cohen (2011) have done the same for university organizations. But, again, the dimension of the historical constitution of gender-space offers additional insights into how these practices change or do not change over time. For example, gender differentiations may be 'written out' in the policies and procedures of an organization and yet remain 'written into' the spaces and places where work occurs. One particular insight from the RHUL case is that it helps to challenge the tendency to equate, and sometimes as a result to marginalize, the study of gender with the study of women (Collinson & Hearn, 1994); the existence of explicit 'rules for men' regulating where and when men may be present helps to emphasize that gender-space structures the conduct and experience of both men and women. Considerations of organizational space could also serve to de-stabilize the binary gender distinction of men and women, with recent discussions of transgender people's access to public toilets (Johnston, 2016) being an example of how space both organizes and is organized by assumptions about gender.

Whilst gender has been the most obvious sociological category of the RHUL case those of class (which figures somewhat in our case), ethnicity or disability (neither of which have been covered here) are also ripe for exploration: what historically accreted understandings of these might be found within organizational spaces? For example, historical assumptions about mobility may well be embedded into buildings so that even where these are adapted to enhance access that very adaptation marks out the parameters of ‘normal’ and ‘disabled’ users. Equally, ethnic distinctions in organizations may be made manifest by the spaces and places where different ethnic groups work and socialize, which may be historically embedded (and naturalized) as the way things have ‘always’ been. So these and many other areas are potentially researchable using the concepts and methods we have developed in this paper.

Clearly the historical method we have deployed to analyse this case will be only viable where an organizational archive exists. However, this does not mean that history is irrelevant where no archive exists; it may require the use of other kinds of historical method and materials.

Equally, the case we have examined concerns a rather striking, grandiose building. In other cases the buildings and space might be meagre, cramped, decrepit and devoid of architectural merit or interest. But these things in themselves would – in those cases – be a key part of understanding organizational space and history. They would have a different set of social meanings offering a different kind of reservoir to be drawn upon in order to contribute to organizational identity. It is crucial to attend to the fine-grained detail of such specificities in

order to understand how the particularities of an organizational identity may be constructed.

Yet whilst the specificities will necessarily be just that an analysis of organizational ‘space in history’ can, in principle, be deployed in order to understand how any organization develops and maintains an identity.

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### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> For concision, we refer to the institution as RHUL (the post 1992 name) when talking about the present day and the College when referring to the early period.

<sup>2</sup> In line with the conventions of archival history, here and hereafter we use the RHUL archive catalogue identifiers when referencing archive material.



<sup>3</sup> RHUL follows the Oxford usage of the term ‘quadrangle’ rather than the Cambridge term ‘court’.

<sup>4</sup> This is plural because Holloway also founded a sanatorium, built in the same style by the same architect.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/archives/exhibitions/community/belowstairs.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/documents/pdf/ugprospectus2017.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/ourcampus/home.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.placehacking.co.uk/tag/rhul/>

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**Image 1: Founder's Building, Royal Holloway, University of London, RHC AR**

**PH/101/59 Archives, Royal Holloway, University of London.**

**Image reproduced courtesy of the Royal Holloway, University of London Archive.**





**Image 2: Classroom, pre 1910. RHC AR PH/285/6/3/23 RHUL Archives.**

**Image reproduced courtesy of the Royal Holloway, University of London Archive.**



**Image 3: Miss MM Gostling's study, 1893–1897. RHC AR RHC PH/116/17 RHUL**

**Archives.**

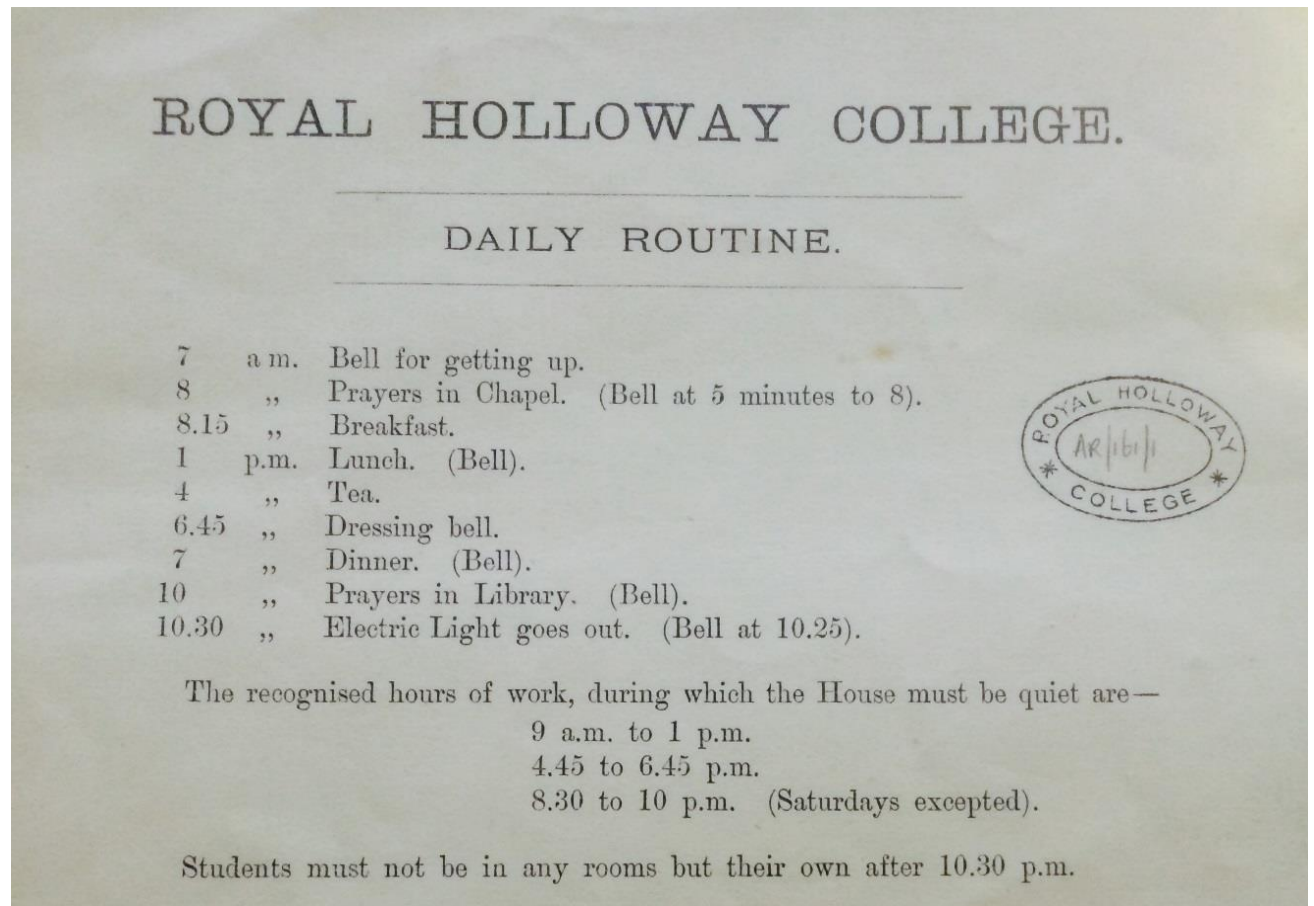
**Image reproduced courtesy of the Royal Holloway, University of London Archive.**



**Image 4: Royal Holloway College Daily Routine, circa 1906. RHC AR/161/1 RHUL**

**Archives.**

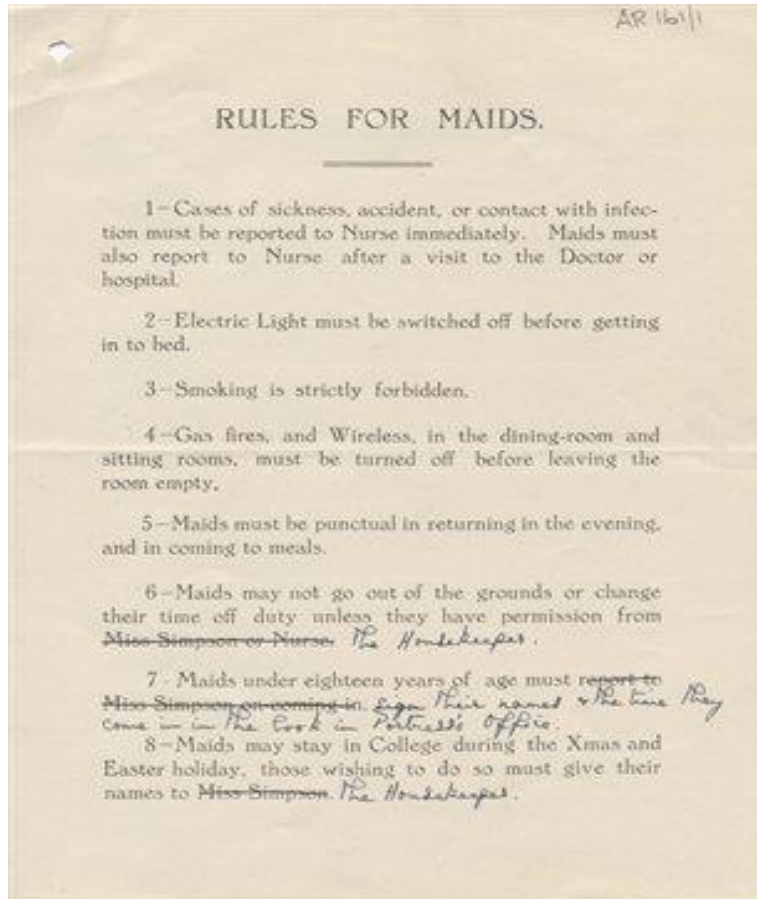
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**Image 5: Rules for Maids, pre-1914 with additions of unknown date. RHC AR/161/1**

**RHUL Archives.**

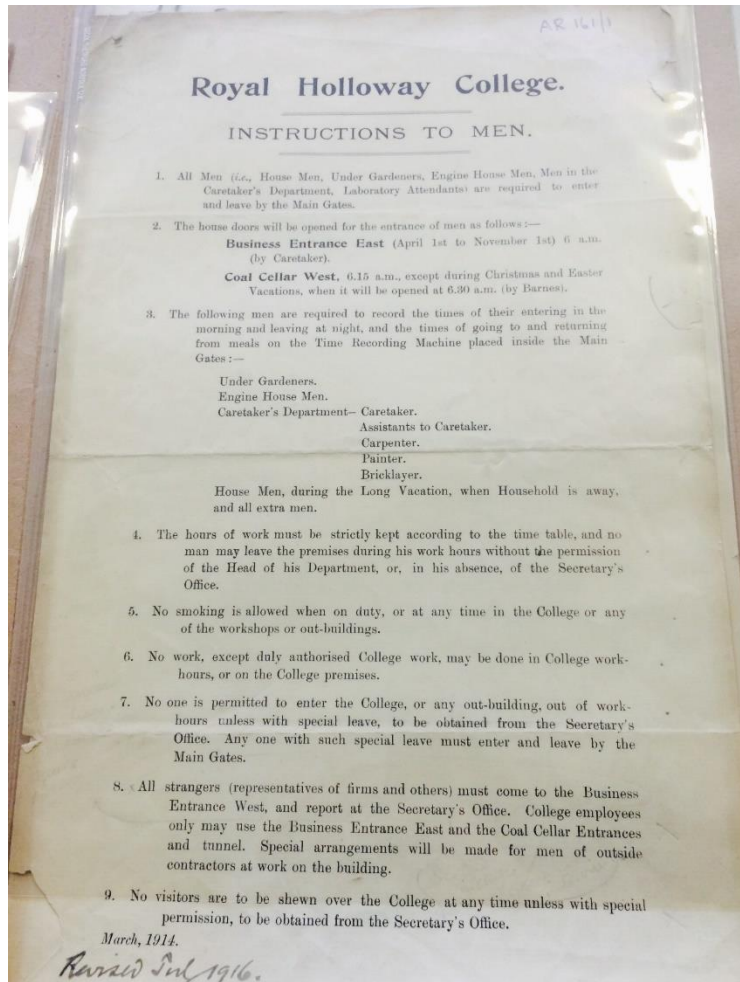
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**Image 6: Instructions to Men, 1916. RHC AR/161/1 RHUL Archives.**

**Image reproduced courtesy of the Royal Holloway, University of London Archive.**





**Image 7: Signage during building work 2016 #1. Authors' photograph.**



**Image 8: Signage during building work 2016 #2. Authors' photograph.**



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